

2004
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Performance Excellence Awards
Winners

On October 1, 2004, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Performance Excellence Awards were presented by Nelson J. Sabatini, Secretary, to DHMH employees and teams at the annual DHMH Performance Excellence Awards Ceremony held at 201 W. Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland. 107 nominations of DHMH employees had been submitted by DHMH employees. An Evaluation Committee, representing a cross-section of employees, had reviewed each nomination and scored them according to the degree that the nominees' actions were above and beyond standard duties and achieved noticeable results. Thirty-five nominations scored high enough to receive a Performance Excellence Award. They each received a framed certificate signed by the Secretary and eight hours of incentive leave. The award winners are as follows.

Administrators – Customer Satisfaction

Thomas Lewis, Harford County Health Department

Nominated by the Senior Staff of the Harford County Health Department

As the administrator for the Harford County Health Department, Tom Lewis earned his award for achieving outstanding customer satisfaction. This was a result of his extraordinary customer service in all his interactions. Some of the words the senior staff use to describe Tom are "extraordinary, fair, a consummate professional, even-tempered, supportive, good-humored, kind, caring, and ethical". He has maintained his calm demeanor under the most extreme stress and puts a positive spin on every situation, while often pitching in to help with tasks outside his assigned duties. He has been instrumental in the success of many of the health department's programs while also ensuring the success of individual employees. The senior staff of the Harford County Health Department feels fortunate to have Thomas Lewis on their side.

Administrators – Innovation

Irma Bevans, Fiscal Services Administration

Nominated by Robert Cassidy

Every year the Division of General Accounting had to manually create a document summarizing federal grant activity. It would take three people six weeks to gather the information. Additionally, each quarter, information on indirect costs of federal funds also had to be collected. That task required 50-60 hours to complete. Irma Bevans conducted extensive research to find a way to improve the process. From that research, she created automated processes along with writing detailed instructions on how to use them. The new processes allow the yearly report and the quarterly reports to be run in less than a day and they can be run at any time. As a result of these innovations, hundreds of employee hours a year are being saved, records are kept more current, and the State is earning more interest on the federal grant monies.

Office or Clerical Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Teresa Friend, Joseph D. Brandenburg Center

Nominated by Shelly Amick

As a secretary at the Brandenburg Center, Teresa Friend has myriad duties that she performs with exceptional customer service. However, she went above and beyond her job duties when she stepped in to fill the void created by reductions in the recreation staff. The Brandenburg Center serves the severely developmentally disabled. It is vitally important that these consumers have enjoyable experiences in their lives. With the reductions in the recreation staff who provided those experiences, Teresa has consistently volunteered to go on numerous consumer activities to fill the void. She has donated her own monies, dressed up for special occasions, served as a stand-in on last minute notice, and organized special activities. Thanks to Teresa Friend, the consumers at Brandenburg Center get to have fulfilling recreational experiences they otherwise would not have.

Office or Clerical Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Mary Nichols, Worcester County Health Department

Nominated by Diane Scarisbick

As an Office Clerk, Mary is responsible for taking care of clients when they come in: greeting them, clerking them in, and getting financial, billing and insurance information from them. She also routes incoming client calls. Those are her standard duties. But she does so much more. Mary makes distressed clients feel comfortable. She creates a personal relationship with them and gains trust from them. That, in turn, makes the clients trust the rest of the staff. This is very important because that trust allows staff to get more information from the clients which results in providing better treatment. Clients ask for Mary by name because they know she will give them first class treatment. She knows their families and what is going on in their lives. She makes them feel like people and not just a number. She treats her coworkers in the same exceptional manner. She is always willing to help while also being extremely efficient and accurate with her work. When she isn't working in the front, it takes twice as long to get the clients through. Other departments ask her to help them. Mary doesn't mind helping. She says, "The job has to get done" and "I'm glad they feel confident enough in me to do it."

Office or Clerical Workers – Leadership

Tracy Bryan, Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response

Nominated by Julie Casani with the unanimous agreement of the staff of the Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response and endorsement by EDCP and by CHA leadership

As an administrative assistant, Tracy Bryan demonstrates exceptional leadership to everyone. There is never a time anyone, internally or externally, asks for something that Tracy doesn't know where it is, can't find it immediately, or help with it. Tracy often completes tasks before anyone even anticipates they need to be done. She is the consummate organizer and keeps everyone, administrators included, in line, prepared, and on time. She has greatly contributed to the successful integration of DHMH emergency response capacity with other state and local agencies, which serves as a model for other states' programs. She always sets the standard. By performing her best she shows everyone how to perform their best. When Tracy came to her current position, her previous supervisor said he was losing his right hand. Julie Casani says, "If we were to lose her, we would be losing both of ours".

Paraprofessionals – Customer Satisfaction

Darryl Hairston, Holly Center

Nominated by Marie Holley

As a Direct Care Assistant II, Darryl Hairston provides physical direct care to developmentally disabled individuals residing at Holly Center. Over the past year, due to staffing shortages, he has worked above and beyond his standard duties to assist in teaching several in-service training programs. He has taught CPR, First Aid, Driver Improvement, Domestic Violence in the Workplace, Managing Disruptive Behaviors, and Medical Emergencies classes. He has, on numerous occasions, altered his personal schedule to accommodate Holly Center's needs. Due to his efforts, compliance with mandatory in-service training has increased, staff on all three shifts have been able to attend in-service training, and additional classes and courses have been developed and presented. Darryl Hairston works hard to ensure customer satisfaction is achieved with all customers, even those who are outside his standard duties.

Paraprofessionals – Customer Satisfaction

Freddie Harmon, Holly Center

Nominated by Evelyn Kapoor

Freddie Harmon, as a Direct Care Assistant II, provides physical direct care to developmentally disabled individuals residing at Holly Center. Over the past year, he has developed innovative ways of training residents. Some of the residents will complete tasks for Freddie that no one else can replicate. "Family members of residents have expressed their appreciation and amazement about what their loved ones can accomplish and the increase in their level of independence. For profound and severely mentally retarded individuals, the process requires an endless amount of patience and perseverance to encourage and arrive at what may seem like negligible improvement to the outsider but is a milestone for the residents. Freddie has enabled many of these small miracles to happen. He is passionate about what he does and expresses how privileged he feels to be able to care for these trusting individuals. Freddie Harmon has truly displayed the qualities of someone who consistently goes above and beyond expectations and standards set."

Professionals, Supervisors – Innovation

Enrique Martinez-Vidal, Maryland Health Care Commission

Nominated by Joyce Burton, Jean Moody-Williams, and Kristin Helfer Koester

During these times of budget reductions, with no corresponding reduction in the demand for services, Enrique Martinez-Vidal has successfully developed innovative ways to fund Maryland Health Care Commission projects to provide information, particularly regarding health care provider performance, to consumers and employers who purchase health care and to improve the accountability of insurance carriers and health care practitioners who provide care. This includes funding a Patient Safety Center through sponsoring organizations rather than through non-existent state funding, leveraging funding from the federal quality improvement organization in Maryland (the Delmarva Foundation) to fund the Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide, and obtaining funding from the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid to pilot hospital patient satisfaction surveying. Because of his actions, Maryland continues to excel in promoting quality health care despite budget shortfalls and has emerged as a national leader in performance reporting.

Professionals, Supervisors – Innovation

Karen Tolley, Eastern Shore Hospital Center

Nominated by Dennis Mitchell

As a Fiscal Services Officer II for the Eastern Shore Hospital Center and the Upper Shore Community Mental Health Center, Karen Tolley provides fiscal administration services. After co-leading a client financial workshop class, Karen saw a need to develop a listing of community resources available for clients. She also saw a need for a PowerPoint presentation for the hospital and one for the Mental Health Center to have visual presentations about the mission and history of both facilities. She proposed her ideas, which were accepted. She then partnered to produce a comprehensive Community Resource Guide that is given to clients upon their discharge. The guide allows clients and their families to be aware of community services available to them that they otherwise might not know about. She led the development of the two PowerPoint presentations, including using her own supplies and resources, which are now available to any staff member to use to present information about either facility. The Mental Health Center presentation was used to educate local leaders at an official meeting regarding the future of that facility. Thanks to Karen's innovation, important information is now communicated more effectively.

Professionals, Supervisors – Innovation

Allan Wood, Division of Program Cost and Analysis

Nominated by Anthony Aversa

As an accountant manager, Allan Wood has demonstrated initiative and innovation in addressing long standing deficiencies in the DHMH facility cost report process. He created a database to accumulate and delineate interest on capital projects in DHMH facilities dating to 1992, allowing for increased federal recoveries. He created spreadsheets to accumulate and calculate depreciation on DHMH facilities' capital assets also allowing for increased federal recoveries. Additionally, through appeals and his expert testimony regarding Medicare and Medicaid funding in specific cases, over \$150,000 has been recouped by the State. He freely shares his knowledge and expertise with staff and key facility personnel thus augmenting their efforts. With the State's current budget situation, increased third party recoveries (currently over \$58 million in FY04) of the operating cost of DHMH facilities is becoming increasingly important. Allan Wood's actions have resulted in a lower net operating cost for DHMH facilities.

Professionals, Supervisors – Leadership

Judith Geisler, OOE Pharmacy Program

Nominated by Philip Cogan, Eva Carey-Brown, Marlo Johnson, and Dennis Klein

Judith Geisler has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the development and management of Maryland's Preferred Drug List, in the management of Maryland Drug Utilization and Review through the Drug Utilization and Review Board and its contractor, and in her participation on the Maryland Mental Health Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. The impact and potential impact of medical drug use is enormous. Judith Geisler has worked tirelessly to ensure that the right drugs are used the right way in an efficient and economical manner throughout the State. Due to her leadership, the Maryland Pharmacy Program will save upwards of \$10,000,000 in FY 2004, a system for reducing abuse of Medicaid eligibility has been implemented, and she has profoundly influenced the availability and cost containment of appropriate medication for mental health patients.

Professionals, Supervisors – Leadership

John Nickerson, Queen Anne's County Health Department

Nominated by his staff: Chester Cissel, John Wheeler, Tom Gillan, Anne Converse, Larry Schultz, Gabe Houghton, J. Tommy McKenzie, Cheryl Walbert, Cindy Embert

As Director of Environmental Health in Queen Anne's County, John Nickerson directs a staff of nine in overseeing a variety of environmental health programs. He demonstrates outstanding leadership by regularly going above and beyond the call of duty. He consistently works after hours and on weekends to ensure that work is completed correctly and on time. He has gone out of his way to establish close working relationships with the county health officer, the county plumbing board, zoning office, animal control office, emergency management team, and numerous county supervisors and directors, private consultants and installers. He consistently attends public meetings after normal working hours. Additionally, he takes every opportunity to reward and recognize his staff. His employees consistently try to mirror his outstanding performance with their own. His supervisor says, "Mr. Nickerson is an outstanding employee and a model public servant. No task is too difficult or too low for him to be involved in. He is committed to the health and well-being of the county."

Professionals, Supervisors – Leadership

Kenneth Welch, Frederick County Health Department

Nominated by Larry Bohn

As the Intermediate Supervisor in the Food Control Program for Frederick County, Kenneth Welch's duties include supervising two field sanitarians, regularly inspecting over 200+ food service facilities, serving as the standardization officer for all food service staff, and supervising food control plan reviews. In the Summer of 2003, the Frederick County Health Department was informed that it was responsible for permitting, inspecting, and monitoring butcherings and meat curings conducted as fund raisers by civic organizations. Ken volunteered to accept responsibility for the program. He assisted in the development of training courses and developed inspection control. Additionally, he conducted training for the civic organizations and staff. He has taken the lead in on-site inspections which often requires working on weekends and being on-site as early as 5:00 a.m. He has met with resistance. However, due to his soft-spoken but firm approach and ability to work with people, 11 of 13 groups are in compliance and he is working with the other two to bring them into compliance. He has established an effective program of licensing and monitoring, procedures and protocols, that have improved the protection of the public's health.

Professionals, Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Marie Holley, Holly Center

Nominated by Jane Carmean

Marie Holley is a nursing instructor for the Holly Center. When the law changed to require that all direct care contact staff needed to be Certified Nursing Assistants, she developed curriculum and materials approved by the Board of Nursing. She has since not only trained Holly Center staff but she is also assisting in developing a Regional Training Center to provide free training for staff from community programs. In addition, due to the long-term absence of the Director and the Training Specialist of the Staff Development and Training unit, she has assumed their duties while also performing her own. With that, she has ensured that Holly Center maintains training requirement compliance. Additionally, she was elected to a three year term as co-chair of the Facilities Quality Council. Additionally, during the past year, she completed a Nurse Practitioner program as part of her professional development. Marie Holley has gone the extra mile and then some to satisfy her customers.

Professionals, Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Ellen Mason, Joseph D. Brandenburg Center

Nominated by Barbara Hockman

Ellen Mason's standard duty is charge nurse on the dayshift at the Brandenburg Center. However, she additionally has: been certified to teach Certified Nursing Assistant classes; teaches potential employees and students from outside agencies for free (saving them thousands of dollars); teaches First Aid and Aging of Fragile People to staff; prepares for her classes at home on her own time; fills in for coworkers on their shifts; and volunteers on her own time to take Brandenburg residents to their doctors. Her efforts were perhaps best illustrated when she took, on her own time, a resident with critical health issues, who is unable to walk, needs oxygen continuously, and is tube fed, to visit her aging father on his birthday, three hours away. She even

contacted the local fire department to arrange for a seating device that allowed the resident to ascend to the top floor of the apartment building where her parents live. All at no cost to the State. Her supervisor says, "Ellen epitomizes the true meaning of the word nurse: mentally, spiritually, and physically."

Professionals, Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Lisa Olinger, Joseph D. Brandenburg Center

Nominated by Lori Sites

Due to budget reductions, Lisa Olinger has taken on the work of two positions, Coordinator of Special Programs and Volunteer Coordinator. In this capacity she has excelled in meeting the needs of her customers, the individuals living at the Brandenburg Center and their families. She has gone beyond her job duties to ensure that the residents are able to maintain relationships with their families. This is most critical as the residents' parents age and are not as capable of maintaining contact as before. Lisa takes pictures of the residents and helps them send them with cards to their parents on Mothers Day and Fathers Day. She developed a program to have residents visit their parents, and often accompanies them. She has become a leader in advocating for the residents' rights including being co-leader of the in-house residents' rights group. She also partners with a local college to educate students about individuals with developmental disabilities including establishing personal contacts between them. Lisa goes above and beyond to ensure the satisfaction of her customers.

Professionals, Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Linda Thomas, Charles County Health Department

Nominated by Linda Abell Blake

Linda Blakes' standard duties involve providing resource coordination to approximately 80 individuals with developmental disabilities. However, she goes far beyond her standard duties to ensure customer satisfaction for all customers. In addition to maintaining her workload: she routinely volunteers to train new staff; she facilitates mentoring between newer staff and experienced staff; she makes presentations to community groups (this is outside her duties); and she routinely volunteers to assist with new projects. Linda's supervisor routinely receives notes and phone calls from customers expressing appreciation for her efforts. She is well recognized in the community and she enhances the reputation of the Charles County Health Department.

Professionals, Workers – Innovation

Janice Green, Western Maryland Hospital Center

Nominated by Penny McQuarrie, Tamela Young, Cathy Marshall

As a Physical Therapist Assistant II, Janice Green's primary responsibilities include providing physical therapy services to patients. Janice has gone far beyond her standard duties by becoming involved in the health of employees at the hospital. She conducts a back education and training orientation for new employees to try to ensure they don't injure their backs on the job. Back injury is a frequent injury for those who must physically move patients. She conducts job site analysis and ergonomics assessment, performing injury prevention analysis for any employee or department who requests it. She re-trains and monitors the progress of post-injury employees to ensure successful recovery. She has created a wellness weight-training program for employees, volunteering to instruct employees in proper strength training exercise including creating individualized programs for them. As a result of Janice's innovations, there has been a reduction in worker compensation premiums, a reduction in on-the-job injuries, a reduction in on-the-job re-injuries, and employee time off from work due to injury has been reduced.

Professionals, Workers – Innovation

Harriett "Mikey" Hayes, Caroline County Health Department

Nominated by Diane Clark

Harriet "Mikey" Hayes works part-time as a Social Worker II for the Caroline County Health Department. She performs a myriad of duties exceptionally well, often working far beyond the hours she is paid for. However, she does even more than that. She diligently researches opportunities for funding to provide services to customers. During these tight budgetary times, every penny, and every extra penny, counts. As a result of her efforts, Mikey has obtained a \$30,000 grant that was used towards the purchase of a new 14 passenger, wheelchair lift bus to transport customers. She also obtained a \$1,000 grant to provide yoga for senior adults. She is currently pursuing obtaining additional funding for another 14 passenger, wheelchair lift bus. Mikey Hayes doesn't have to pursue these funding opportunities but she does.

Professionals, Workers – Innovation

Nancy Porter, Calvert County Health Department

Nominated by Douglas Weems

Nancy Porter is the Coordinator of Adult Services for the Calvert County Core Services Agency in the Calvert County Health Department. In that capacity, she performs numerous duties including ensuring appropriate mental health services and medications are provided, that pharmacy bills are accurate, and that grant funding is used as efficiently as possible. While one of the original expectations was for her to simply refer patients to opportunities for medication assistance, on her own initiative, working on behalf of indigent patients, she has met with pharmaceutical companies to obtain free medications for those who cannot afford it. Additionally, she has succeeded in having the companies provide free educational in-service training to clinical and medical staff covering various mental health topics. As a result of Nancy's innovation and initiative, thousands of dollars in savings for the State have been realized and many more individuals in need of mental health treatment have been served than would have been possible if only available grant monies were used.

Professionals, Workers – Innovation

Dipti Shah, Division of Outbreak Investigation

Nominated by Leslie Edwards

As an epidemiologist with the Division of Outbreak Investigation, Dipti Shah answers outbreak calls and calls about infectious disease concerns and infection control, makes recommendations to local health departments and visits local health departments to review outbreak investigation protocols. Aside from these myriad duties, she took it upon herself to create an internship program with the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health that gives public health students the opportunity to intern with various divisions in the Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control Program (EDCP). The internship program is a win-win situation. It provides students with real public health experience while providing DHMH with additional resources to improve public health services. Four graduate students interned with the Office of EDCP in 2004 and completed studies on three different projects. Their results will be valuable in modifying disease investigation guidelines and planning future public outreach activities. This would not have been possible without Dipti Shah's innovation and initiative.

Professionals, Workers – Leadership

Daniel Arnheim, Spring Grove Hospital Center

Nominated by Ronald Gray and the Dayhoff A Treatment Team

There are many areas in which Dr. Daniel Arnheim demonstrates leadership above and beyond his standard duties. In addition to his own responsibilities, he acts as a hospital-wide consultant for patients' behavioral plans, he directs specialized hospital treatment services for patients diagnosed with mental illness and substance abuse, he provides continuing education to other health professionals, he challenges and supports treatment team members and students to achieve their best, and he developed, launched and has supported with his own money and time the successful Performance Improvement (PI) Project. The PI Projects seek to find ways to improve treatment for patients. The most recent project resulted in improved health and weight loss for patients. Dr. Arnheim is held in extremely high regard by patients and colleagues. He is a true leader.

Service Maintenance Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Ruby Bullock, Spring Grove Hospital Center

Nominated by Terry Jordan

Ruby Bullock is a Food Service Worker. Her duties include the assembly and distribution of patient meals and to ensure the meals are assembled therapeutically correctly and distributed to the correct patient while maintaining all safety and sanitation requirements. During a patient meal service, a patient was choking on food. Ms. Bullock saw the patient turning blue. She performed the Heimlich maneuver on the patient and dislodged the food. Ruby Bullock saved the patient's life.

Service Maintenance Workers – Customer Satisfaction

Emma Nelson, Holly Center

Nominated by Jean Church

Performing housekeeping duties in a facility that cares for the developmentally disabled, Emma Nelson not only performs her duties in an exemplary manner, leaving areas sparkling, she has also gone out of her way and above and beyond her standard duties to ensure her customers are satisfied. She has taken courses in

safe lifting, transporting, bathing and dressing, and feeding of the residents of Holly Center. Those courses are not required for her position. She has followed through on those courses by assisting with the transporting, dressing, feeding, and entertaining of Holly Center residents and by giving them personal attention. Emma Nelson positively influences her coworkers and she has had a very positive impact on the residents' quality of life.

The Budget Savers, Eastern Shore Hospital Center

Dennis Mitchell, Richard Meekins, Bill Hallinean, Frank Barnes

Nominated by Karen Tolley

This team developed and initiated a more efficient and cost effective way of issuing supplies to patient units, housekeeping, and health information services. They improved a process that used to encumber eight to ten people and cost \$779 a week to one that involves only four people and cost \$286 a week. The new process engineered a number of improvements that have resulted not only in monetary savings and reductions in the number of people involved but in freeing up staff to perform their primary duties, increased customer satisfaction, and in a more accurate accounting of supplies usage. Three of the team members are storeroom staff.

The Denton Site of the Caroline County Health Department Mental Health Program

George Reeve, W. Craig Wessells, Tina Raynor, Ethel Smith, Malinda Garrett, Cherry Moaney, Doran Bowman, Linda Gadow, Charlotte Pierce, Peter Conlin, Phyllis Saathoff, Eric English, Su Jusell-Lappin, Janice Davison, Kaitlin Waldrip, Susan Bownes

Nominated by Michael Campbell

The clinical, clerical, and administrative staff of this mental health clinic successfully transitioned from grant funding to fee-for-service by combining their talents to identify productive and efficient ways to provide community health services while maintaining quality treatment. Processes were streamlined, alternative funding sources obtained, and partnerships formed. Additionally, all staff donated countless hours of uncompensated time and services on behalf of their customers. As a result, the Caroline County Mental Health Clinic went from a deficit of \$112,578.00 in Fiscal Year 1998 to a surplus of \$133,941.00 in Fiscal Year 2003.

Dietetic Services Department's Hostess Program, Western Maryland Hospital Center

Eugene Dotson, Barb Hildebrand, Belinda Peterson, Melody Rhines, Gary Starliper, Tina Stottelmyer, Phyllis Thomas, Cheryl Watson, Betty Wilhide

Nominated by Katie Gardner

In a hospital, proper nutrition for patients is very important. Additionally, meal time can be a lonely time for patients and a busy time for those delivering the meals. At Western Maryland Hospital Center, the Dietetic Services Department's Hostess Program Team was formed to improve customer satisfaction of patients and staff. The meal delivery process was completely revamped. Now, instead of utilizing busy nursing assistants, hostesses deliver the meals, help patients with them, keep track of patient's fluid records, and, perhaps most important, talk and joke with the patients, giving them a social encounter not just a meal. Patients now have someone they recognize and are familiar with, they are more accurately receiving the nutrition prescribed for them, and their hydration has improved. The nursing staff is thrilled as they now have more time for their patient care duties and the hostess's get to establish a close rapport with their patients, a win-win-win situation.

Eligibility Policy Systems Team, Beneficiary Services Administration

Cathy Croghan Sturgill, Stephanie Meyer

Nominated by Cora Chua Tracy

This team has been responsible for and has contributed to several successful process improvements. This includes improving processes in the Foster Care & Adoptions application and eligibility determination process, improving processes in the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility Systems and Medicaid Management Information System, improving processes in the MCHP/MCHP Premium system, improving the CARES/MMIS reconciliation process, and in the development and implementation of the Case Information Form for redetermining eligibility for assistance benefits. Their efforts have resulted in improved accuracy, timeliness, efficiency, and compliance. While the improvements are to programs and systems with lengthy names and lots of acronyms, in the end, what Cathy and Stephanie have done directly affects the public during critical times in their lives.

The EQUIP Team, RICA Baltimore

Bonnie Boddie, Deanna Forbes, Allen Kleinberg, Vanessa McFadden, Jody Predergast, Michael Poysa, Ronald Stokes, Marke Webb
Nominated by Harlin Gray

The EQUIP Team works with a special group of high risk, mentally ill adolescents who are street-wise, have underdeveloped moral judgement, and lack appropriate social skills to succeed in our complex society. Utilizing a variety of methods including peer counseling, group and individual techniques, and encouragement of a positive culture that emphasizes moral development, anger management, peer motivation, and achieving success, the Team's efforts have resulted in an increase in the safety of clients and staff, reduced on-the-job injuries and their resulting costs, an increase in the morale of clients, their families, and staff, and reduced instances of unproductive behavior. These are significant accomplishments and are a testament to the improvements the Team has implemented.

Healthy Start Team, Division of Outreach and Care Coordination

Nadine Smith, Clara Connor, Donna Devilbiss, Marian Pierce
Nominated by Rosemary Murphey

Healthy Start is a home visiting and case management program provided to Medicaid eligible high-risk pregnant and postpartum women and children under the age of two. The services are provided by Maryland's 24 local health departments under the direction of the Healthy Start Team. To improve the quality of services and ensure maximum budgetary value, the Healthy Start Team developed a completely new audit system to objectively, fairly, and consistently evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for improvement. This was a challenge because each health department provides the services differently to meet the unique needs of their customers. However, the challenge was met, the audit system developed, and all local health departments have been audited. This has resulted in improved services, the sharing of best practices by the local health departments, improved interaction between the Healthy Start Team and the local health departments, and the establishment of a system that provides the Medicaid Program with the ability to objectively ensure tax payer dollars are effectively utilized.

Nurse Dispensing Computer Program Development Team, Harford County Health Department

Debbie Leight, Ellie Garrison, Maryann Zelinski, Kim Kelley, Linda Jager
Nominated by Thomas Lewis

The Board of Physician Quality Assurance Declaratory Ruling for Nurse Dispensing in Public Health Settings requires the generation of data on medication labeling, patient profiles, prescription logs, and tracking drug inventories. This data was previously collected in different ways including the use of handwritten logs. The Harford County Nurse Dispensing Computer Program Development Team worked for a year to develop a computer program that successfully meets the data requirements. The program has been implemented and is very successful. It is more accurate and faster than previous methods thus increasing the safety and quality of Nurse Dispensing. Handwritten logs are no longer needed. Nurses actually like it because it is easy to use. Now, two other counties are planning to implement it. This is truly a process improvement success story.

OCPMP Team, Office of Contract Policy, Management and Procurement

Robert Rucker, Theresa Ammons, Lisa Benbow, Jeri Bentley, Trudy Brown, Donna Dicerbo, Marilyn Evans, Sharon Gambrell, Jeane Guy, Christina Harvin, Annette Isaac, Russell Jenkins, Patrice Johnson, Dennis Kokoskie, Sabrina Lewis, Zena Morris, Roc Rinaldi, Donna Schimunek, Egzi-a-kulu Tamrat, Julian Thomas, Lee Williamson
Nominated by Lee Williamson

The OCPMP Team has developed and implemented a number of procurement process improvements. Primary among these is improving the procurement process from a point-to-point process to a team-based process that brings together major players and approval authorities. This has resulted in a nearly 50% reduction in procurement process cycle time and a savings of over 28,000 hours of employee time. Additional improvements include developing procurement classes that have trained over 400 employees, creating Corporate Purchasing Card Certification and Small Procurement Certification programs that have certified over 200 employees, developing an online resource guide and vendor manual, creating an Audit/Compliance unit and Project Management unit, and completing a first-ever procurement work flow analysis. These efforts and others have resulted in improved services and outcomes and in OCPMP winning two national awards from the

National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, the Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award and the Pareto Award of Excellence in Public Procurement, the Institute's top award. No other State agency has ever won these awards.

Positively Compassionate, Deer's Head Hospital Center

Celeste Bennett, Mary Jane Hynes, Janie Messick, Angie Perry, Thelma Price, Jane Ruark, Carol Steffy, Sue Widdowson

Nominated by Katherine Kolarick

This team was formed to improve communication throughout the facility. As a result, three improvements were made which have had a profoundly positive effect. Conflict resolution information was obtained and shared with staff. Staff have found this information useful at work and at home. A "Thank You" bulletin board was erected along with recognition forms so staff could post notes of gratitude for all to see. This has proven so popular that there are now twelve "Thank You" bulletin boards throughout the Center. The third project resulted in the development of "Pocket Praisers". These are instant thank you notes that say "You Are a Star". Individuals can carry with them and give them instantly to another person. These have also proven to be extremely popular. As a result of all of these initiatives, positive communication has greatly improved among staff along with morale.

Renovators, Joseph D. Brandenburg Center

Ginger Robinette, Julia Jackson, Dawn Laber, Cheryl Farrell, Patricia Smith, Sue Ann Manns, Ronda Emerick

Nominated by Tracy Groves

Normally, the process for renovating building interiors requires sufficient funds and outside contractors or staff with those job duties. However, when those are not available, what do you do? At Brandenburg Center, what this all-female team did was to renovate four bedrooms, a living room, and a respite care room at a home for the developmentally disabled at the Center. Primarily using their own money and their own time, they painted, wallpapered and decorated the rooms, including purchasing pictures, greenery, and decorative furniture, making sure they reflected the personal preferences of the residents who live there. This is important since these are the residents' homes. The Renovators Team members have used their personal talents and creativity, along with their time and money, to create a pleasant home environment for the people they serve.

Sew On & Sew Forth, Joseph D. Brandenburg Center

Julia Jackson, Ginger Robinette

Nominated by Cindy Garner

This two person team has stepped in to provide an essential service that most people aren't aware of, don't know of it's importance, and don't realize how costly it can be. Julia Jackson and Ginger Robinette have combined their outstanding sewing skills to complete numerous projects that benefit the residents of the Brandenburg Center. They have worked diligently to improve the living environment of the residents by constructing curtains, quilts, wall hangings, chair covers, privacy screens, bed rail covers, clothing alterations, and customized covers for wheelchairs. In addition, they have helped residents make lap robes given to nursing homes, stuffed bears given to comfort children in hospitals and ambulances, and a special quilt used as a charity fundraiser. Julia and Ginger have saved thousands of dollars for the State, improved the residents' environment, and helped residents contribute to the community. All with needle and thread.